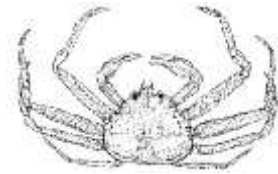

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



Cora Campbell, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director



Contact:		Petersburg Area Office
Joe Stratman		P.O. Box 667
Adam Messmer		Petersburg, Alaska 99833
Phone: (907) 772-5238	(907) 465-4853	Date: January 18, 2013
Fax: (907) 772-9336	(907) 465-4944	Time: 4:00 p.m.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA COMMERCIAL TANNER CRAB FISHING SEASON ANNOUNCEMENT

Petersburg . . . The 2012/2013 commercial Tanner crab fishery in Southeast Alaska will open concurrently with the commercial golden king crab fishery at 12:00 noon on **Sunday, February 17, 2013**.

Season length of the Tanner crab fishery will be determined by guidelines set forth in the Registration Area A Tanner crab harvest strategy [5 AAC 35.113]. The initial period of the commercial Tanner crab fishing season in the core areas and non-core areas will be at least five days in length. Additional fishing time may be allowed based on the number of registered pots at the start of the fishery [5 AAC 35.113(b)(1)]. A news release will be issued on February 17, 2013 announcing the total number of pots registered in the fishery for the 2012/2013 season and whether extra fishing time will be provided during the initial period. At the end of the initial period, the core areas will close to fishing, and the non-core areas will remain open for an additional five days.

The core area includes the following waters in Registration Area A:

- (A) Icy Strait: waters west of a line from Point Sophia to 58°14.00' N. lat., 135°16.00' W. long., including the waters of Port Frederick and Excursion Inlet, and waters east of Section 14-A, including the waters of Glacier Bay not closed by the National Park Service;
- (B) St. James Bay: waters west of a line from Point Whidbey to 58°33.00' N. lat., 135°09.60' W. long.;
- (C) District 15: waters east of a line from the north tip of Little Island to Point St. Mary, including Berners Bay;
- (D) Section 11-A: waters of Section 11-A in Stephens Passage;
- (E) Section 11-B: waters north of line from Point Arden to Circle Point and east of a line from Point Arden to Point Bishop, including all waters of Taku Inlet;
- (F) Seymour Canal: waters north of 57°37.00' N. lat.;

- (G) Port Snettisham: waters east and north of a line from Point Styleman to Point Anmer;
- (H) Endicott Arm and Tracy Arm: waters east of a line from Point Coke to Point Astley;
- (I) Gambier Bay: waters west of a line from Point Gambier to 57°24.90' N. lat., 133°53.00' W. long.;
- (J) Pybus Bay: waters north and west of a line from Point Pybus to the easternmost tip of San Juan Island to a point at 57°14.60' N. lat., 134°07.30' W. long.;
- (K) Section 13-C, excluding Sitkoh Bay;
- (L) Keku Strait, Port Camden and associated bays: waters southeast of a line from Cornwallis Point at 56°55.91' N. lat., 134°16.42' W. long. to Point McCartney at 57°01.49' N. lat., 134°03.51' W. long. and west of a line from Point Camden at 56°48.66' N. lat., 133°52.79' W. long. to Salt Point Light at 56°50.68' N. lat., 133°52.02' W. long.;
- (M) Frederick Sound: waters east of a line from Bay Point to Boulder Point including Farragut Bay, Thomas Bay, Section 8-A, and Section 8-B, and north and east of a line from Mitchell Point to Point St. John, including Kah Sheets Bay, Duncan Canal, and Wrangell Narrows;

The non-core area includes the remaining waters of Registration Area A.

Stock Status

Catch-survey modeling of the 2011/2012 fishery and October 2012 survey data produced a regional biomass estimate of 5.3 million pounds of mature male Tanner crab. This compares to a mature male Tanner crab biomass estimate of 3.1 million pounds from the previous year.

District 16

As in past seasons, District 16 will be open and managed as a non-core area for the 2012/2013 season to test for stock recovery. This district had been managed as part of the Yakutat Area Tanner crab fishery, which was designated as 'collapsed and recovering' by the Alaska Board of Fisheries beginning in January 2000. Areas within District 16 were briefly opened to test for stock recovery beginning during the 2003/2004 season. No effort in District 16 occurred during similar openings since the 2003/2004 season.

Closed Area Descriptions

The department reminds fishermen that a National Park Service Lifetime Access Permit (LAP) is required to fish for Tanner crab in waters of Glacier Bay north of a line from Point Carolus to Point Gustavus. Within this area, some waters are closed; these are: the Beardslee Islands, the Hugh Miller/Charpentier Inlet complex, and upper Dundas Bay wilderness areas, and the non-wilderness areas Geikie Inlet, the West Arm of Glacier Bay proper north of 58° 50.00 N. lat., and the East Arm of Glacier Bay proper north of a line drawn from Point Caroline, through the southern end of Garforth Island to the east side of Muir Inlet. These areas are shown on the attached map. For more information on fishing in Glacier Bay proper, including detailed latitudes and longitudes of closures, fishermen must contact the National Park Service at (907) 697-2230.

Registration

The registration deadline for the 2012/2013 season is January 18, 2013. All commercial fishermen registering in the 2012/2013 Tanner crab fishery after the registration deadline will be required to pay a \$45 late fee [A.S. 16.05.065]. Commercial fishermen may register at Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, Tanner Crab commercial

Petersburg, Wrangell, and Haines ADF&G area offices. Simultaneous, though separate, registrations are allowed for Tanner crab and golden king crab. Commercial shrimp or Dungeness crab pot registrations may also be obtained and fished simultaneously with Tanner crab, if the appropriate seasons are open at the same time [5 AAC 35.128(b)]. Processors are reminded that registration for tenders is required.

Logbooks are mandatory for all pot fishing vessels participating in the Tanner crab fishery. Logbook packets, buoy tags, and other related materials are currently available. Logbook packets include instructions for filling out the logbooks, logbook sheets, envelopes for their delivery, maps showing ADF&G statistical areas, and all news releases available at the time the packet is obtained.

Buoy tag placement is addressed in 5 AAC 35.126(a). Buoy tags are mandatory for all commercial Tanner crab gear and are available in any area office in Southeast Alaska for \$1.25 each. Replacement tags are available at all area offices upon receipt of a completed tag replacement affidavit. **All missing tag numbers must be provided on the affidavit form before replacements can be issued.** The completed affidavit form must be signed by the permit holder and a crewmember.

For more information on Tanner registration and unregistration contact Joe Stratman in Petersburg at 772-5238 (office) or 518-0755 (cell), or Adam Messmer in Douglas at 465-4853 (office) or 723-3342 (cell).

Simultaneous Registration Regulations

While the Tanner crab fishery is open, a golden king crab fisherman who is also registered for the Tanner fishery may use a maximum of 80 pots [5 AAC 34.125(b)(3)]. Twenty-four hours after the Tanner season closes regionwide in Registration Area A [5 AAC 35.020(k)], or after a fisherman, or his agent, has unregistered from the Tanner crab fishery, fishermen already registered for golden king crab may purchase an additional 20 tags in order to fish the maximum of 100 pots for golden king crab.

Regulations regarding permit holders with simultaneous registration in golden king crab and Tanner crab fisheries [5 AAC 34.109; 5 AAC 35.106] state that before fishing for golden king crab in a portion of Registration Area A that is closed to Tanner crab fishing a vessel must have all Tanner crab removed from the vessel, must unregister to fish for Tanner crab by signature of the vessel owner, agent or permit holder and a department representative, and that once a permit has been unregistered for Tanner crab, Tanner crab may not be retained or sold. **Until a permit holder simultaneously registered for the golden king crab and Tanner crab fisheries unloads all Tanner crab and unregisters to fish for Tanner crab, he or she may not have gear in fishing condition in a portion of Registration Area A that is closed to Tanner crab fishing.** Likewise, if a vessel registered only for golden king crab wants to fish for Tanner crab during the non-core period they must remove all gear from the closed Tanner crab area before registering for Tanner crab.

At the January 2009 Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting on Southeast Shellfish the board adopted a proposal to allow retention of golden king crab caught in pots configured for the Tanner fishery if simultaneously registered for both fisheries and if both fisheries are open. Golden king crab taken in Tanner crab pots as described in 5 AAC 35.125(f) may be retained if the CFEC permit holder fishing for Tanner crab is also registered to fish for golden king crab and both crab fisheries are open at the same time [5 AAC 34.125(a)].

Qualifying permit holders with current registration in golden king crab and Tanner crab fisheries will be allowed to retain blue king crab in the 2012/2013 golden king crab and Tanner crab fisheries [5 AAC 34.110(e)] from areas described as blue king crab fishing areas [5 AAC 34.108]. However, the waters of District 14 in Glacier Bay north of the latitude of Point Gustavus are described as a blue king crab fishing area [5 AAC 34.108(c)] but commercial king crab fishing in Glacier Bay is currently prohibited by federal regulation. For more information on the commercial blue king crab fishing prohibition in Glacier Bay contact the National Park Service at (907) 697-2230.

Also, permit holders with simultaneous registration in golden king crab and Tanner fisheries are required to keep separate logbooks for each species, and abide by the inseason reporting requirements in place for the golden king crab fishery, **even if the permit holder begins by targeting Tanner crab.** For more information contact Joe Stratman in Petersburg at 772-5238 (office) or 518-0755 (cell).

Landing Requirements

Tanner crab fishermen holding Tanner crab taken in core areas are not required to request extended holding when fishing non-core areas after core areas have closed [5 AAC 35.031(d)]. However, by regulation [5 AAC 35.031(c)(2)], all Tanner crab must be landed within the 24 hours following the season closure for the registration area unless a representative of the department has authorized extended holding. **Contact with the department representative must be made within the 24 hour period following the season closure for the registration area.** The registration area closure date will be announced in a news release to be issued February 17, 2013. Requests for extended holding may be made by contacting Joe Stratman in Petersburg at 772-5238 (office) or 518-0755 (cell), or Adam Messmer in Douglas at 465-4853 (office) or 723-3342 (cell).

Selected Regulations

Fishermen are also reminded that weather delay criteria for Tanner and king crab fisheries have been recently adopted in regulation. Any delay to the start of the 2012/2013 Tanner and golden king crab fisheries due to weather will be announced 24 hours before the start of the fisheries [5 AAC 35.110(b) and 34.110(f)].

Gear limits are set by regulation at a maximum of 80 pots or 20 rings for Tanner crab [5 AAC 35.125(b)(1)&(2)]. Pots and rings may not be fished simultaneously from the same vessel [5 AAC 35.106(b)].

In-water gear storage is allowed for five days following the season closure for Tanner crab in any portion of Registration Area A [5 AAC 35.127(a)(2)]. Following the regionwide season closure for Tanner crab in Registration Area A, in-water gear storage is allowed for seven days [5 AAC 35.127(a)(1)].

A person or vessel that operates pots or ring nets for commercial, subsistence, personal use or sport purposes during the 30 days immediately before the scheduled opening date of the commercial fishery may not participate in that commercial Tanner fishery [5 AAC 35.128(a)]. This prohibition does not apply to the operation of commercial shrimp or Dungeness crab pots [5 AAC 35.128(b)]. Fishermen are reminded to review gear storage requirements [5 AAC 35.127], and other pertinent regulations in the 2012-2014 Commercial King and Tanner Crab Fishing Regulations booklet available in all area offices. Regulations can also be viewed online at:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishregulations.commercial>

Lost Pots

Reporting of lost pots or pots left in a closed area in fishing condition should be directed to the Alaska Wildlife Troopers (AWT) offices in Juneau (465-4000) or Ketchikan (225-5118).

News releases web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

<i>Office</i>	<i>Ketchikan</i>	<i>Petersburg</i>	<i>Wrangell</i>	<i>Sitka</i>	<i>Juneau</i>	<i>Haines</i>	<i>Hoonah</i>	<i>Yakutat</i>
<i>ADFG</i>	225-5195	772-3801	874-3822	747-6688	465-4250	766-2830		784-3255
<i>AWT</i>	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000		945-3620	
<i>Gillnet Hotline</i>	225-6870	772-3700			465-8905	766-2830		

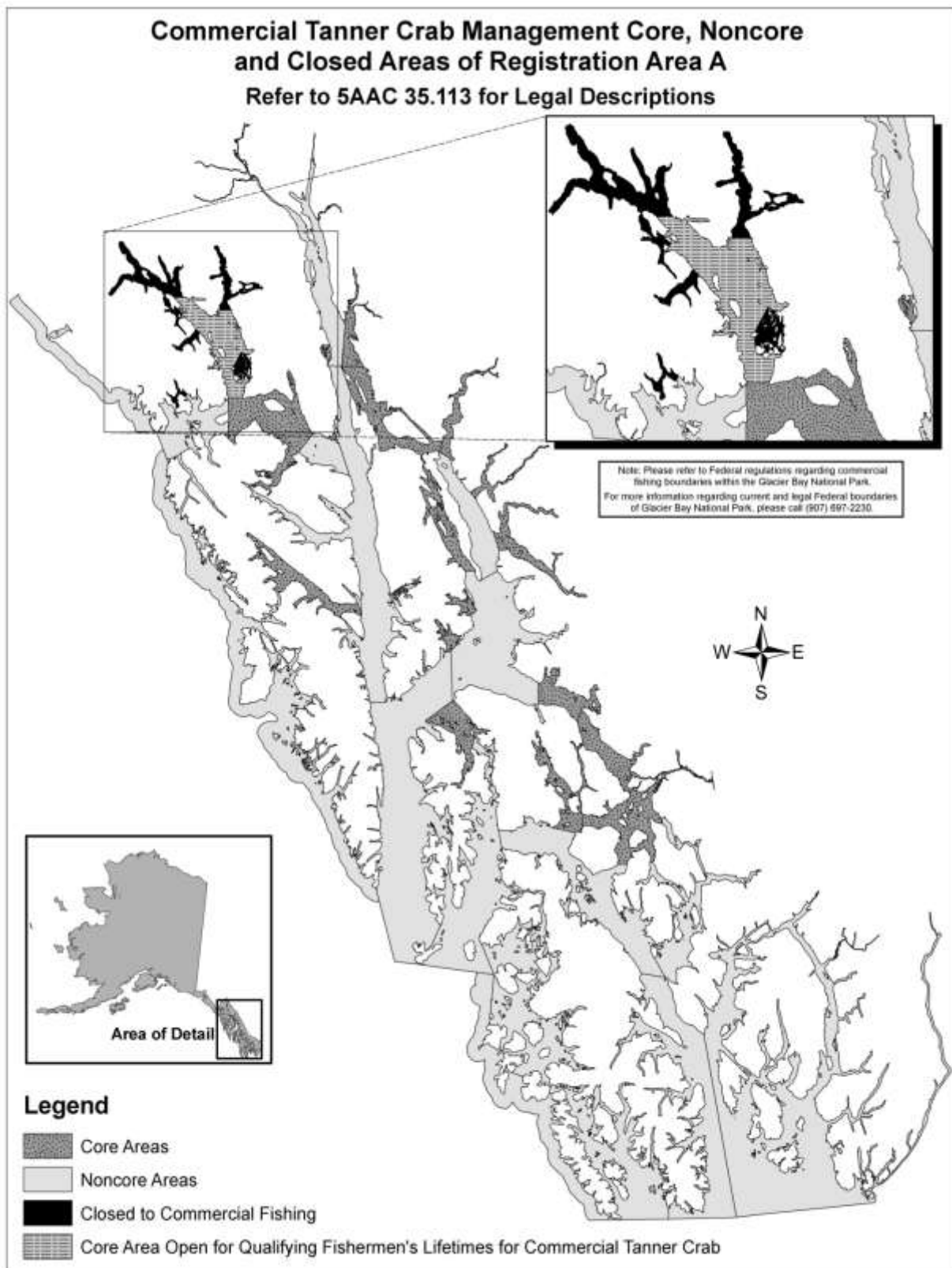


Figure 1: Management areas for the 2012/2013 Tanner crab commercial season in Southeast Alaska. This map is intended for general reference only. Please refer to text for legal descriptions of management area boundaries.